

The Old Scout

History of Scouting in the U.S.A.

105th Anniversary: 2015

This brief history of the Scouting Movement is intended to give young scouts information about the early founders of Scouting and the rich traditions that make up the scouting program as they forge their own paths toward the rank of Eagle Scout.

History of Scouting, Part IV: Early American Founders – Daniel Carter Beard

Dan Beard (1850 – 1941) was another influential founder of the Scouting Movement in the United States. He was born in Ohio, and grew up in Kentucky during the Civil war, learning outdoor skills and hearing stories of the American Pioneers. He moved to New York and became a writer and illustrator. He lived for a time in Flushing, Queens, and became active in his local scout troop.

In 1905, he formed an organization for boys called the Sons of Daniel Boone, dedicated to outdoor adventure and skills. He merged his organization with Ernest Thompson Seton's Woodcraft Indians to form the basis for the Boy Scouts of America in 1910.

Dan Beard remained active in Scouting all his life, and was a familiar sight at jamborees, wearing fringed buckskin leather clothes and a 'coonskin cap. He was an enthusiastic personality, and was known to scouts world-wide as "Uncle Dan". Dan Beard was a friend of Ernest Thompson Seton and Robert Baden-Powell. He assisted his own sister in forming outdoor organizations for girls, among them, the Campfire Girls.

Dan Beard may have been influential in gaining the support of President Theodore Roosevelt during the early years of scouting. He was active with Troop 1 in Flushing, Queens. The troop (still in existence) has a banner from its early years that was created by Dan Beard.